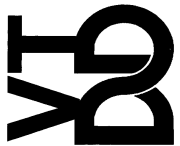


VT Developmental Disabilities Council
103 S. Main Street Room #117 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-0206



VERMONT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL



FY 2007
ANNUAL REPORT



Greetings from the President

2007 was a time of change for VTDDC as it ended long-standing projects, and launched new projects to realize its 5-year State Plan.

As never before VTDDC reached out to organizations and communities across Vermont through a broad range of Requests for Proposals for statewide and community-based projects. New initiatives including the VT Family Network and the Information, Referral and Assistance Project are creating essential connections and information sharing. With VTDDC support, several new projects were initiated, designed to benefit youth leaving school. VTDDC has also moved into a more active role connecting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to policymakers to ensure that our voice is heard.

We continue to keep in mind the Vermonters who helped us build the new 5-year State Plan, and continue to create ongoing opportunities for them to guide us in our work. With a strong commitment to realize our goals, we can make a positive impact on our communities and the people of Vermont.

We hope you learn more about VTDDC through this Annual Report. Please keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Tami Trowell

Tami Trowell
VTDDC President



Agency Representatives

Lucy Abair	Department for Children & Families
Claire Bruno	Department of Education
Cindy Ingham	Department of Health
Sara Kobylenski	Agency of Human Services Field Service Director
Glen McClintock	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Ed Paquin	Vermont Protection & Advocacy
Theresa Wood	Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
Susan Ryan	Center on Disability & Community Inclusion, University of Vermont

Staff

Karen Schwartz	Executive Director
Judith Parsons	Administrative Assistant

To Contact VTDDC

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Website:	www.ddc.vermont.gov

Council Members as of 1/31/08

Self-Advocates, Individuals and Family Members

<i>Dawn Arsenault</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>Patty Czarnecki</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Ira</i>
<i>Pamela Dow</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Milton</i>
<i>Herb Gingrich</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Middlebury</i>
<i>Harriet Hall</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Newport</i>
<i>Robert Harvey</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>Jay Lafayette</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Burlington</i>
<i>Brian Lawlor</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Woodstock</i>
<i>Dennis Lindberg</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>So. Burlington</i>
<i>Lance Mead</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Brandon</i>
<i>Robert Price</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Essex</i>
<i>Lisa Smedy</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>Tami Trowell</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Brattleboro</i>



What is VTDDC?

VTDDC is a state-wide council that works to increase public awareness about critical issues affecting people with developmental disabilities and their families.

***The Mission of VTDDC is
to facilitate connections and
to promote supports that bring people
with developmental disabilities
into the heart of Vermont communities.***



60% of its 23 members are self-advocates and family members. VTDDC uses its federal funds under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act for projects at the local, regional and state levels. These projects bring Vermonters with developmental disabilities into the heart of their communities through public education, leadership training, and advocacy aimed at enhancing individual and family-centered supports and services.

We Believe . . .

***In communities where all people have a “voice”
and are heard with respect;
In safe communities where all people have equal value;
In communities that are friendly and support equality
and fulfilling relationships;
With opportunities, people grow and share their
dreams and abilities; and
That the humanity we share is more important
than our different abilities.***

VTDDC’s Five -Year
State Plan GOALS for 2007-2011

- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families have information necessary to advocate to get their needs met.
- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families will be actively engaged in activities that bring them into the heart of Vermont's communities.
- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families will have open and fair access to a range of supports, services, resources and opportunities based on the needs they identify.
- ◆ Students in high school will have the supports they need for a smooth transition to life in the heart of their communities.
- ◆ People will have increased options for transportation services for work, school, medical, social, recreational and other personal needs.



Council Publications

“**Choosing Words with Dignity**” raises awareness of People First language. In FY 2007 thousands of copies were distributed to diverse entities in VT and across the US including public schools, universities, hunters’ safety trainings, print media, managers’ trainings, city and state government, and Corrections employees.

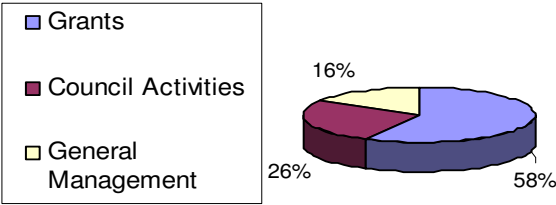


“**179 VOICES: Thoughts on Services and Supports for People with Developmental Disabilities**” describes what is happening in VT through the words of people with developmental disabilities and their families who responded to VTDDC’s 2006 State Plan survey.

“**2006 Survey Scores: Rating Highlights**” summarizes the data from the 2006 State Plan Survey across areas of daily life.

“**State Plan 2007-11 Comprehensive Review & Analysis**” gives a snapshot of VT quality of life including political, economic and social climate. It addresses the realities of life for Vermonters with developmental disabilities, focusing on waiting list data, access to systems of services and supports, and current trends and gaps.

Council Budget



Grantees provided \$ 82,571 in matching funds (cash and in-kind services).

FY2007 Income	
Federal Funds	\$ 461,881
Less Expenses	\$ 427,870
Carry-over to FY08	\$ 34,011

FY2007 Expenditures	
Grants	\$ 247,714
Council Activities	\$ 109,942
General Management	\$ 70,214
TOTAL	\$ 427,870

The Executive Committee Fund provides small grants to individuals and family members to support attendance at trainings and conferences, and to organizations for activities that enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

In addition to individual grants, VTDDC funded:

- ◆ ***Adventure Day***, supporting self-advocacy for deaf students
- ◆ ***Camp Kaleidoscope***, a camp for families living with autism
- ◆ *Parent-initiated, 8-week **Parent Advocate Certification Program***
- ◆ *Parent-initiated **Autism Training for Direct Support Workers***
- ◆ ***Community Partner*** of Kids on the Block Vermont

Vermonters who received grant funding said:



“We are seeing a kind of ‘living history,’ as his joyful self is emerging with competence and confidence.”

“[The conference] helps sum up about 15 years of my life involving my autistic brother.”

“[They] learned that while the law was on our side, discrimination still took place, but there were ways to deal with the situation.”

“I learned how to advocate for insurance coverage for necessary treatments for my son.”

“...My son and our entire family better understand how to find his abilities.”

“Marching with hundreds of other people with disabilities and witnessing how we were educating the public truly allowed [us] to understand the strength and power of direct action.”



Sampling of Results from FY2007 Council Activities and Grant Projects

People Trained

- ◆ 123 people trained in community supports
- ◆ 153 trained in quality assurance
- ◆ 201 self-advocates trained in leadership and self-determination
- ◆ 589 people trained in systems advocacy

People Benefiting

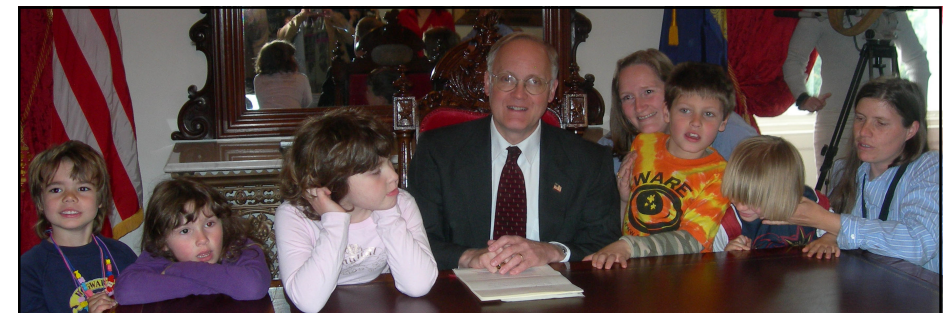
- ◆ 34 people benefitted from quality assurance efforts
- ◆ 35 people received needed health services
- ◆ 155 people were active in inclusive recreational activities

People Active in Advocacy

- ◆ 441 people actively participated in systems advocacy
- ◆ 264 policymakers were educated about issues
- ◆ Awareness initiatives reached 172,987 people

LEADING TO POLICY CHANGES including:

- ◆ Improved access to Medicaid for uninsured youth with functional developmental disabilities
- ◆ Improved Medicaid grievance and appeal procedures
- ◆ Preservation of state share of Supplemental Security Income benefits [SSI]
- ◆ Passage of Autism Plan legislation



Highlights of VTDDC Funded Projects



Communication Support Project matched Vermonters with developmental disabilities with communication specialists to participate in legal actions, and coordinated court referrals. Outreach included technical assistance to attorneys and training for state family service workers at the Department of Children and Families. *Grantee: VT Office of the Defender General*

Disability Employment Outreach Project promoted employment of Vermonters with developmental disabilities through the launch of its new employer website, www.hireus.org, **Abilities** electronic newsletter, and the first-ever Southern VT Employer Forum in Brattleboro. *Grantee: Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities - GCEPD*

Legislator Education and Advocacy Project supported a cross-disability coalition to educate and advocate in the Legislature and with state agencies to extend civil and other rights, and improve services and supports, including: improvements to Medicaid coverage for uninsured and transitional youth; Global Commitment grievance and appeals procedure; and passage of Autism Plan and Youth Study legislation. *Grantee: VT Coalition for Disability Rights - VCDR*



Systems Advocacy Project focused on training and materials to support individuals and systems to improve programs and policies, including two new publications to support family advocacy, **Parent's Guide to Dispute Resolution in Special Education** and **Resource Guide for Families on Access to Developmental Services**. *Grantee: Disability Law Project - Vermont Legal Aid.*

Self-Advocacy Project helped people with developmental disabilities take control over their own lives, make decisions, solve problems and speak for themselves. *Grantee: Green Mountain Self-Advocates - GMSA*



Accomplishments included:



- ♦ Started two new peer-run employment support groups, with funding leveraged from the VT Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- ♦ Published two newsletters including **Work**, featuring stories by employed self-advocates on how jobs make a difference in their lives



- ♦ Trained 68 high school students from seven schools in two regions on self-advocacy and leadership, including "7 Habits of Highly Successful Teens"
- ♦ Supported eight local self-advocacy groups through 20 technical assistance visits
- ♦ Administered scholarship fund for the Groundbreaking "Celebrating Sexuality" conference in May 2007